

**Mayor's column for
The Beacon
For publication on 1/28/10**

Congratulations to Diane Buckshnis who was recently appointed to the Edmonds City Council, filling the vacancy left by the passing of Peggy Pritchard Olson. Receiving the appointment was the easy part!

Now the real work begins. Not just for her but for the other six council members as well. They are relatively new to each other as a working body. Certainly they know each other as many of them have similar goals and views, share the same party affiliation, and have been past observers of the City Council. But working together will take some time and effort.

This group is relatively new to the political scene in Edmonds from an elected standpoint. Five members have two years or less experience as councilmembers. So they will undoubtedly be looking for guidance from the two seasoned councilmembers who have been around quite some time. This should be a good mix for the Council: a couple members who have been there, done that, and five exuberant, fresh-idea members. Hopefully they will mold together for the benefit of all 40,000 people in Edmonds.

They will have an opportunity early on as they work with the Planning Board and Economic Development Commission. These 25 members met for months to come up with a plan to move the City forward from an economic standpoint. At a recent Council meeting, their finished product was delivered to Council and shared on TV to the viewing audience. A copy is available on the City's website if you would like to peruse their good work.

The question that the group asked the Council was, "Are we on the right track?" They want to hear from the Council very soon about the direction the group is heading. In other words, they want the Council to validate their hard work so they can continue to work without fear of a rejection down the road. While I'm certain that the Council has individual ideas about economic development, they need to formulate a collective identity as a Council as to what the future holds.

Of course you can and should help the Council with that task. Read the report and let the Council know your thoughts. Talk to your neighbors, ask them to get involved. This isn't just about downtown or Highway 99; it's about the whole city and what we will look like 25 years from now. Look at what other cities are doing or have already done. We need to act now to ensure a vibrant Edmonds is in our future.